

**WE CLAIM AS OUR INVENTION:**

1. A method for setting an idle distance of an engraving stylus for engraving a rotogravure printing cylinder from a cylinder surface of the rotogravure printing cylinder, comprising the steps of:

providing a sliding foot for guidance of the engraving stylus connected to the sliding foot along the cylinder surface; and

setting the idle distance with respect to a reference surface that replaces or represents the cylinder surface.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the sliding foot together with the engraving stylus connected to it is brought from its working position in an engraving machine before the setting and is brought back into the working positions after the setting.

3. The method according to claim 1 wherein a planar surface is employed as the reference surface.

4. The method according to claim 1 wherein the setting is mechanically or electromechanically monitored and measured.

5. The method according to claim 4 wherein in the setting, the engraving stylus is displaced or moved against a movable detent in defined fashion, the movement thereof being qualitatively monitored and measured.

6. The method according to claim 5 wherein the engraving stylus is moved by machine and controlled.

7. The method according to claim 1 wherein the setting is optically monitored and measured.

8. The method according to claim 7 wherein a measuring or scale microscope is employed.

9. An apparatus for setting an idle distance of an engraving stylus for engraving a rotogravure printing cylinder from a cylinder surface of the rotogravure printing cylinder, comprising:

a sliding foot for guidance of the engraving stylus connected to the sliding foot along the cylinder surface; and

said apparatus comprising a reference surface replacing the cylinder surface.

10. The apparatus according to claim 9 wherein the reference surface is designed planar.

11. The apparatus according to claim 9 wherein said apparatus comprises a measurement and monitoring device.

12. The apparatus according to claim 11 wherein the measurement and monitoring device works substantially electromechanically.

13. The apparatus according to claim 12 wherein the measurement and monitoring device comprises a motion sensor.

14. The apparatus according to claim 11 wherein the measurement and monitoring device works substantially optically.

15. The apparatus according to claim 14 wherein the reference surface is mirrored or reflective, and the measurement and monitoring device simultaneously acquires a tip of the engraving stylus and its mirror image.

16. A method for setting an idle distance of an engraving stylus for engraving a rotogravure printing cylinder from a cylinder surface of the rotogravure printing cylinder, comprising the steps of:

providing a sliding element for guidance of the engraving stylus connected to the sliding element along the cylinder surface; and

setting the idle distance with respect to a reference surface that is indicative of the cylinder surface.

17. An apparatus for setting an idle distance of an engraving stylus for engraving a rotogravure printing cylinder from a cylinder surface of the rotogravure printing cylinder, comprising:

a sliding element for guidance of the engraving stylus connected to the sliding element along the cylinder surface; and

said apparatus comprising a reference surface replacing the cylinder surface.